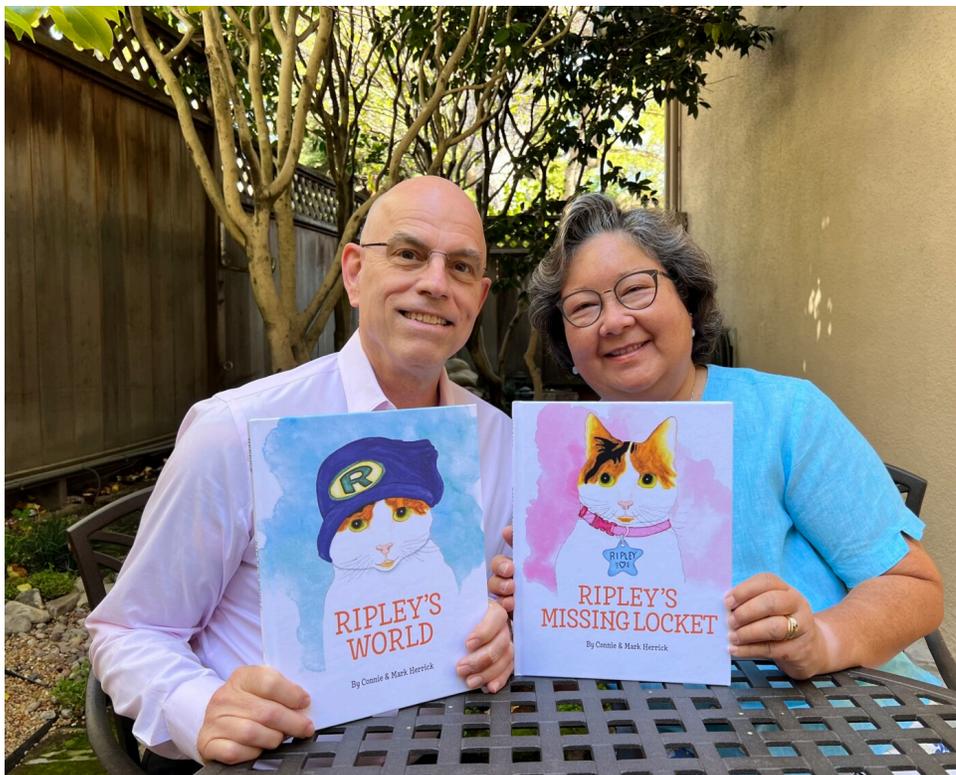


Piedmont couple publish children's books

Exedra Staff | 12 hours ago



Mark and Connie Herrick with the first two books in the Ripley series.

Ripley's Missing Locket, written and illustrated by longtime Piedmont residents Connie and Mark Herrick, is the latest addition to a children's book series they started in 2021. The books, about a tiny, feisty, funny, calico kitty with a big imagination and her unique real-life family that includes two search and rescue German Shepherd dogs and an upside-down goldfish, were created for elementary school readers, and are filled with watercolor illustrations by Mark and story lines written by Connie.

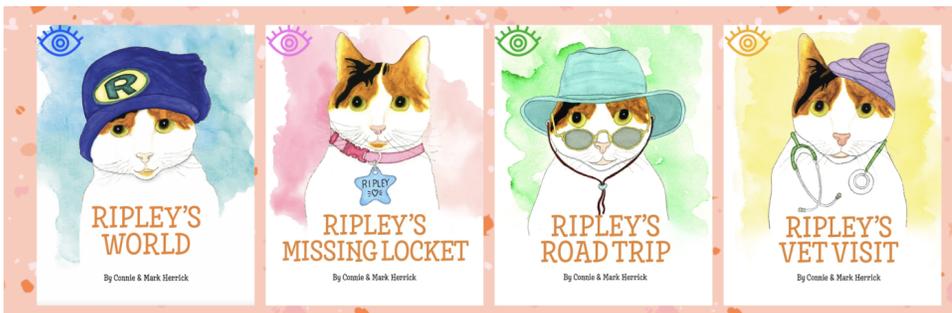


Mark Herrick at work with watercolors.

“We love setting our books in our community,” writes Connie. “Ripley’s adventures take place in our Greenbank home, backyard, and the Oakland Rose Garden.” Ripley’s animal friends, a red-tailed squirrel, twin raccoons and possum family lived in their backyard.

“The main message of *Ripley’s Missing Locket* is how precious family and friends are,” writes Connie. “With a world so focused on material things, there is a tendency to forget what is most important – our connections with each other. Other messages include asking for help when you need it, and that helping others is what gives life real meaning and purpose.”

Their first book, *Ripley’s World*, was based on their own “blended family”, comprised of two-legged, four-legged, local wildlife and a large, disabled goldfish. The variety of characters stress the importance of diverse individuals with unique personalities, skills and life perspectives. There were also characters presented with no specified gender. The main message of *Ripley’s World* was gratitude. Two more books – *Ripley’s Road Trip* and *Ripley’s Pet Visit* – are in the works.



“Art is an important part of our lives,” Connie says. “Exposure to different art forms is educational and good for our imagination and spirit. We hope our books create opportunities for parents to have conversations with their children about

life, feelings, and ideas.”

The Herricks say they donate their book sale profits to organizations that support animal adoption and wildlife preservation, and they donate their books to Piedmont elementary schools, local libraries, and soon to the East Bay Children’s Book Project.

You can learn more about the Herricks and the Ripley series – including where to buy their books – on their website **HERE**.
(<https://www.ripleyandfriendz.com/>)